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WASHINGTON, DC—Today, the House voted for an automatic cost of living increase for members' salaries, increasing them to \$168,500.

U.S. Congressman Peter DeFazio has voted against and forgone all congressional salary increases since being elected to Congress. Instead, he has tied his salary to cost of living adjustments (COLAs) for Social Security recipients, and used the excess pay to fund scholarships for dislocated workers at five community colleges in southwest Oregon and to pay down the national debt. By the end of this year, he will have turned back more than \$260,000 and funded 157 scholarships.

"America is teetering on the edge of bankruptcy," DeFazio said. "We need to get our fiscal house in order, and part of the solution rests in reducing expenditures. Cuts should start at the top. Congress shouldn't feather its own nest when so many of our nation's needs are unmet and so many families are struggling to get by. That's why I have voted against congressional pay raises and instead have donated the money to reduce the debt and for dislocated workers to get retrained."

DeFazio supported the previous question on the rule on H.R. 5576, the fiscal year 2007 Transportation, Treasury, and HUD Appropriations bill, which would have allowed a vote on the member's COLA, rather than allowing it to automatically go into effect. The previous question was defeated by a vote of 249-167.